

Housing Counselor Role

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Parkview Services

Overview

- Housing Counseling Standards
- Housing Counselor Duties under FFA

National Industry Standard

- **Code of Ethics** and Conduct for Homeownership Professionals
- Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling— **Foreclosure Intervention Specialty**
- <http://www.homeownershipstandards.com>
- Agencies receiving FFA funding must adhere to NIS and Code of Ethics

Code of Ethics

- Commitment to Clients
- Client Decision-Making
- Competence
- No Conflicts of Interest
- Professional Behavior
- Fair Payment for Services
- Stop Unnecessary Services
- Consultation
- Referrals
- Integrity of the Profession



National Industry Standards for
Homeownership Education and Counseling

Code of Ethics and Conduct

INSTRUCTIONS:

The Code of Ethics and Conduct is an essential component of the National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling. It is required that a signed copy be kept on file within your office for each counselor listed in your organization profile, and made available upon request. It is important that counselors read, sign and agree to abide by the Code of Ethics and Conduct and the guidelines set forth in the National Industry Standards for Homeownership Education and Counseling.

(Please fill out all fields below)

☐ By checking this box (or signing below), I acknowledge that I have received and read the National Industry Standards Code of Ethics and Conduct for Homeownership Professionals and agree to adopt and adhere to the guidelines as outlined.

Signature: _____
Print Name: _____
Company: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: _____
Email: _____
Web Site: _____
Date: _____

Save digital copies on a
computer in your office:

1. Have each counselor read the Code of Ethics and Conduct guidelines and fill out this PDF form on the computer.

2. Make sure each counselor checks the signature box indicating that he/she has read and agreed to the guidelines.

3. Save and file each counselor's PDF form electronically.

OR

Keep printed copies on
file in your office:

1. Print out as many copies of the form as necessary and have each counselor read the Code of Ethics and Conduct guidelines and fill out the form.

2. Make sure each counselor signs the form indicating that he/she has read and agreed to the guidelines.

3. Keep the signed hard copies on file in your office.

RCW 61.24.160

- (2) Housing counselors have a duty to act in good faith to assist borrowers by:
- (a) Preparing the borrower for meetings with the beneficiary;
- (b) Advising the borrower about what documents the borrower must have to seek a loan modification or other resolution;
- (c) Informing the borrower about the alternatives to foreclosure, including loan modifications or other possible resolutions; and
- (d) Providing other guidance, advice, and education as the housing counselor considers necessary.

FFA Funding Minimums

From HUD Housing Counseling Handbook (7610.1 version 5)

- **5.4.1 Interview the client** in a private space and in a confidential manner to obtain basic information about the client and the client's housing problem.
- **5.4.2 Identify resources** within the counseling agency, the client's community, HUD and other agency's administering applicable programs which might assist in resolving the client's housing problem;
- **5.4.3 Design a counseling plan** on behalf of the client, identifying what steps the homeowner will take to resolve the delinquency and what steps the counselor will take to assist in this process;
- **5.4.4 Explain the counseling plan** to the client and obtain the client's consent for the counselor to carry out the plan, including the actions the client must take;
- **5.4.5 Monitor the client's progress** toward resolving the housing problem;
- **5.4.6 Refer the client to other resources** within the community;
- **5.4.7 Coordinate with HUD or other agencies** which are the administrators of applicable programs, mortgagees, lenders, and other public and private community organizations which are also working with the client, in order to provide optimum service to the client;
 - 5.4.8 Refer clients, when reasonably appropriate, to other community service organizations;
 - 5.4.9 Provide housing counseling services on a priority basis to low- and moderate-income clients;
- **5.4.10 Contact and work with the appropriate mortgagee** to assist clients who are (1) in default on their monthly mortgage payments, (2) being considered under any loss mitigation program, or (3) in financial difficulty or in default under a forbearance agreement; and
 - 5.4.11 Provide counseling offices and services that is accessible to persons with a wide range of disabilities.

Borrower Documents Per FFA

- **(a) The borrower's current and future income;**
- **(b) Debts and obligations;**
- **(c) Assets;**
- **(d) Expenses;**
- **(e) Tax returns for the previous two years;**
- **(f) Hardship information;**
- **(g) Other applicable information commonly required by any applicable federal mortgage relief program.**

Experienced Housing Counselors

- Give homeowners realistic outlook on outcomes
- Manage homeowner expectations
- Provide financial counseling
- Understand what lenders need to resolve a default
- Have developed lender contacts
- Document potentially actionable timelines

Determining Eligibility for Mediation

- Triage based on foreclosure timeline
- Validate owner occupancy
- Validate property type
- Validate beneficiary is not exempt
- Verify financial status and alignment with desired resolution
- Ensure FFA document requirements are met